CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for operating a digital data processing system, comprising steps of:

detecting an activation of a user input that indicates that the system or a program executed by the system has become non-responsive to the user;

determining an identification of any currently open files and programs with which currently open files are associated;

determining an identification of those programs that are not normally in a non-responsive state;

transferring to a data storage business entity, through a data communications network, those currently open files that are associated with programs that are identified as being not normally in the non-responsive state; and

operating the data storage business entity so as to store the transferred files.

2. A method as in claim 1, and further comprising a step of notifying the user that any currently open files that are associated with programs identified as being not normally in the non-responsive state have been transferred to the data storage business entity.

3. A method as in claim 1, and further comprising a step of restarting the digital data processing system, and retrieving at least one of the stored files from the data storage business entity.

4. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of detecting is executed in response to the user manually activating a switch.

5. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of detecting is executed in response to the user activating one or more keyboard keys.

6. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of transferring transfers, in association with the currently open files, an identification of their associated programs.

7. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of transferring includes a step of saving the currently open files in a data storage device that forms a part of the system.

8. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of operating the data storage business entity further comprises a step of charging a monetary amount for storing the currently open files.

9. A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of determining an identification of any currently open files comprises a step of monitoring system file open and file close operations, and maintaining a record of those files that are currently open and a record of a program that opened the file.

10. A method as in claim 3, wherein the step of operating the data storage business entity further comprises a step of charging a monetary amount for at least one of storing the currently open files and retrieving the at least one stored file.

11. A digital data processing system, comprising:

at least one processing unit;

a network interface for coupling said processing unit to a data communications network;

a memory coupled to said processing unit; and

a user interface bidirectionally coupled to said processing unit, said user interface

comprising button means for activation by a user for indicating that the system or a program executed by the system has become non-responsive to the user; said processing unit being responsive to a detection of the activation of said button means for determining an identification of any currently open files and programs with which currently open files are associated, for determining an identification of programs that are not normally in a non-responsive state, and for transferring to a data storage business entity, through said data communications network, those currently open files that are associated with programs that are identified as being not normally in the non-responsive state.

12. A system as in claim 11, wherein said processing unit further notifies the user, with said user interface, that any currently open files that are associated with programs identified as being not normally in the non-responsive state have been transferred to said data storage business entity.

13. A system as in claim 11, wherein said processing unit transfers, in association with the currently open files, an identification of their associated programs.

14. A system as in claim 11, wherein said memory comprises a disk, and wherein said processing unit also saves the currently open files on said disk.

15. A system as in claim 11, wherein said processing unit is operable for retrieving at least one of the stored files from said data storage business entity for storage in said memory.

16. A system as in claim 11, wherein during operation of said system said processing unit monitors file open and file close operations and maintains a record of open files in said memory, as well as a record of an identification of a program that opened the file.

17. A system as in claim 11, wherein said data storage business entity operates to charge a monetary amount for at least one of storing the currently open files and retrieving the stored files.

18. A computer readable data storage medium for storing program instructions for execution by a processing unit of a digital data processing system that includes a memory coupled to said processing unit and a user interface bidirectionally coupled to said processing unit, wherein execution of said program instructions causes said processing unit to be responsive to activation of a user interface input, that indicates that the system or a program executed by the system has become non-responsive to the user, for determining an identification of any currently open files and programs with which currently open files are associated, for determining an identification of programs that are not normally in a non-responsive state, for transferring over a data communications network those currently open files, that are associated with programs that are identified as being not normally in the non-responsive state, to a data storage business entity for storage, for notifying the user, with said user interface, that the currently open files have been transferred, and for subsequently retrieving the stored files from said data storage business entity.

19. A computer readable data storage medium as in claim 18, wherein during operation of said system said program instructions further cause said processing unit to monitor file open and file close operations and to maintain a record of open files in said memory as well as a record of an identification of a program that opened the file.

20. A computer readable data storage medium as in claim 18, wherein said data storage business entity operates to charge a monetary amount for at least one of storing the currently open files and for retrieving the stored files.

21. A method for operating a digital data processing system, comprising steps of:

detecting an activation of a user input that indicates that the system or a program executed by the system has become non-responsive to the user;

in response to detecting the activation of the user input, transferring to a data storage business entity, through a data communications network, selected user information; and

operating the data storage business entity so as to store the transferred user information, and to subsequently retrieve and transfer back to the digital data processing system at least some of the stored user information.

22. A method as in claim 21, wherein the data storage business entity operates to charge a monetary amount for at least one of storing the user information and for retrieving the stored user information.

23. A method as in claim 21, wherein the data storage business entity operates to charge a monetary amount for being available to store and retrieve the user information.

24. A data storage business entity, comprising:

a data communications network interface for coupling the data storage business entity to client data processing systems; and

a controller, responsive to an arrival of information from a client data processing system, for storing the information and for subsequently retrieving and transferring at least some of the retrieved information back to the client data processing system, said controller being operable for charging the client data processing system for at least one of storing the user information, retrieving the stored information, or for being available to store and retrieve the user information.